



# The City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library

Policy Number: LIB2022-20

<b>Policy Name:</b> <b>REFERENCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES</b>
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Resolution #:	LIB2022-20	Date:	08 April 2004
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## **POLICY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a statement of philosophy and identify key objectives respecting the provision of reference and information services in the Library.

## **SCOPE**

This policy shall apply to the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library and all of its branches.

## **DEFINITIONS**

In reading and interpreting the Reference and Information Services policy, the following definitions shall apply:

“Branches” means a library branch of the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library.

“CEO” means the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library.

“City” means the Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes.

“Library” means the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library.

“Library Board” means the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library Board.

“Reference and Information Services” mean those services that link people with both print and electronic resources to fulfill informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs.

“Reference Department” means the Reference and Information Services Department housed in the Lindsay Branch;

“Reference Materials” means those physical items in the library collection that have been designated for Reference purposes.

## **POLICY, PROCEDURE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **1.0 Responsibility**

- 1.1 The Library Specialist - Reference is responsible for the provision of reference and information services including collection development. Reference Department holdings and reference collections located in library branches will be tailored to meet the needs of the community. All public service branch staff will attempt to answer questions and requests for information from library patrons, using the tools available at their branches. If the answer is beyond the scope of branch resources, a reference request will be forwarded to the Reference Department. Reference Department staff will use the reference collection and other resources to research the answer.
- 1.2 Reference training of Branch staff is the responsibility of the Manager – Public Services, Area Coordinators and the Library Specialist - Reference.

### **2.0 Objectives**

- 2.1 It is the policy of the Library to answer all reference and information questions efficiently, accurately, and as completely as possible, and to assist patrons in the use of the library and its resources. If it is not possible to find an answer using the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library Resources, patrons will be referred to other libraries, agencies and community resources.
- 2.2 All patrons seeking help at the Library will be greeted in a friendly manner and regardless of sex, age, ability and ethnic background they will be treated equally, with respect and courtesy.

### 3.0 Types of Service

3.1 The Library provides a variety of information services to patrons that are described below:

3.1.1 **Quick Reference.** These questions can usually be answered immediately using public library resources.

3.1.2 **General Reference.** General Reference usually requires a lengthier search and the use of a number of sources to arrive at a complete answer. Library staff will guide and assist patrons in pursuing the answer while also providing, as required, informal instruction in how to search and use library resources to the best advantage.

3.1.3 **Readers' Advisory.** Readers' advisory is the activity of recommending books to readers and helping them identify their reading preferences. Staff assist patrons by recommending material using the criteria identified by the patron.

3.1.4 **Location of Material.** Staff will check for a patron to see whether a specific desired item is in the Library's collection. If it is, but is not immediately available, instruction will be given to the patron in requesting the material. If the Library does not own the item, assistance will be given to the patron in requesting it through interlibrary loan.

3.1.5 **Excluded Questions.** Staff are prohibited from providing interpretative and/or consultative advice on medical, legal, or tax issues. The City of Kawartha Lakes Public Library Board and library staff accept no responsibility or liability for any damages sustained through the use of information sources available in the Library.

### 4.0 Priorities of Service

4.1 The extent of personal service to each individual is dependent on the number of patrons to be served. The following priorities are applied:

1<sup>st</sup> priority – requests presented in person

2<sup>nd</sup> priority – requests presented by telephone/voice mail

3<sup>rd</sup> priority – requests sent in by mail/e-mail

4<sup>th</sup> priority – requests received via the interlibrary loan network

## **5.0 Statistics and Evaluation**

- 5.1 A record of the type and quantity of reference requests will be kept for evaluation purposes.

## **6.0 Circulation of Reference Material**

- 6.1 Reference questions may be answered using the entire collection of the Library. Reference material, however, is designated for use in the library only and, as such, does not circulate. At the discretion of the CEO, the Manager – Public Services, the Library Specialist - Reference, or the Area Supervisors a special loan may be granted in extenuating circumstances.
- 6.2 Reference materials located in the Reference Department may be requested by patrons for in-branch use at their local branch. However, exceptions will be made for materials that are (a) fragile (b) irreplaceable or (c) in constant demand. At the discretion of the Library Specialist – Reference, patrons may be requested to attend the Reference Department to access certain reference material.

## **7.0 Patron Confidentiality**

- 7.1 Patron confidentiality is respected at all times.

## **8.0 Patron Feedback**

- 8.1 Patrons who have comments or suggestions regarding services and collections covered by this policy are encouraged to provide them to staff. Complaints will be referred immediately to the attention of the Library Specialist – Reference, the Manager – Public Services, or the CEO and will be dealt with as outlined in 8.2 below.
- 8.2 In the event of a complaint by a library patron, the steps for resolution are as follows:
  - 8.2.1 The patron is provided with a copy of the Library Reference and Information Services policy and requested to put his or her concerns in writing.
  - 8.2.2 The written complaint will be forwarded to the CEO who will read, review and discuss the complaint with the appropriate staff. When the review is completed, the complainant will be provided with a

written explanation. The decision will be provided within three weeks of the date of the receipt of the complaint and will reflect the principles outlined in the Library Reference and Information Services policy.

- 8.2.3 If the patron wishes to pursue the matter further, the CEO will bring the matter forward to the next Library Board meeting. The Board will rule on the complaint and report the decision, in writing, to the complainant and all concerned parties within 30 days of the Board meeting.